

Culture Mile
Business Improvement District

Annual Report 2024/25



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Foreword

As Chair of the Culture Mile Business Improvement District, I am delighted to introduce this year's Annual Report, marking another dynamic year of progress and partnership in the heart of the City. Over the past 12 months, we have continued to champion the area's evolution into a vibrant destination where creativity, commerce and community flourish side by side.

This has been a year of purposeful investment and visible impact. From supporting flagship cultural moments like the Barbican's "Purple Hibiscus" commission and the EFG London Jazz Festival's Jazz Social, to delivering vital business engagement programmes and wellbeing activations, our work has been guided by a commitment to relevance and resilience. The BID has supported hundreds of businesses through tailored outreach, marketing campaigns and forums designed to boost growth, collaboration and community connection.

I see placemaking as an absolutely fundamental role of the BID as it knits together our area into a vibrant memorable destination. We launched our public realm vision mid way through the year and we have made enormous strides in delivering on the plan-shaping a greener, more welcoming environment with new festive lighting, street level greening projects and inclusive events. You will read later in the document about commitments we as a board have made to enable this activity both for the year just finished and future years.

Our Community Fund plays a really important role on the ground in the area. It ensures we can impact grassroots organisations that help local people which extends our reach way beyond office blocks and cultural institutions.

None of this would be possible without the energy and insight of our levy-paying members, stakeholders and delivery partners. Thank you for your continued trust and collaboration. I look forward to building on this strong foundation as we work together to shape a Culture Mile that is truly inclusive, future-focused and full of opportunity.



Andrew Smith,
Chair of Culture Mile BID

The BID Boundary



This year has been one of purposeful investment and visible impact – a time when creativity, commerce, and community have flourished side by side across the Culture Mile, shaping a greener, more connected, and future-focused district.

Andrew Smith, Chair of Culture Mile BID





Public Realm Vision & Strategy

The Culture Mile Public Realm Vision and Strategy, was launched in November 2024. It sets out a bold framework for improving the streets and public spaces at the heart of the City of London.

It acknowledges the area as a vibrant blend of history and modernity, home to world-class cultural institutions, historic landmarks, and an ever-growing business community. As the area evolves with major developments and the forthcoming London Museum, this vision will act as a pathway for partnership working, helping to ensure that public spaces remain welcoming, connected, and reflective of the area's rich heritage.

The City of London Corporation welcomed the strategy as an important contribution to its broader programmes, including Destination City, the draft City Plan 2040, and the Climate Action Strategy. The Corporation recognised the BID's leadership in promoting an inclusive, dynamic, and greener environment, aligning closely with its own ambitions for a more prosperous and sustainable Square Mile. The Vision and Strategy builds upon years of collaborative planning, delivering a coordinated roadmap for future placemaking and investment. At its core, the Vision seeks to enhance the connectivity, comfort, and cultural identity of the Culture Mile through a series of clearly defined

objectives: *Welcome to the Culture Mile, A Place for People, Exploring the Culture Mile, and Going Beyond the Name*. The BID's approach focusses on creating greener, safer, and more engaging streets, celebrating the area's unique heritage whilst accommodating growth and innovation. The document serves as both a strategic guide and a call to action – setting the stage for a new era of transformation and partnership in one of London's most distinctive cultural districts.

- The vision has highlighted specific opportunity areas identifying 11 strategy projects covering 9 parts of the footprint.
- The interventions suggested range from short term projects to larger transformational projects.
- As a result of the process a capital pot of £690k has been released to advance these projects.
- As we move through the new financial year. This vision is bearing fruit with projects progressed at 3 of the areas – Long Lane, Barbican and Coleman Street – testing out enhancements in the public realm ahead of transformational change.



£690k

Capital Pot
released to advance
opportunities



11

Improvement
Opportunities
identified



320

Right to the City
participants

35k+

people downloaded
the Big Egg
Hunt App

300+

joined our
programme of
Walking Tours

The 3 eggs in Culture Mile were "collected" more than 5000 times

Inspiring Places

London Festival of Architecture

The London Festival of Architecture celebrated design, creativity, and placemaking across the city. Working with other City BIDs, Culture Mile partnered to deliver installations on the theme of "Assembly", exploring how public space can better serve people and planet.

We worked with a specialist design company to develop "Table in the Round" near Moorgate Station, – identified in the BID's emerging Public Realm Strategy as a key activation site. The installation offered a bold gathering point with integrated greening, remaining in place from June to September. It was later rehomed at Cody Dock, supporting a community regeneration project in East London.

Walking Tour Programme

The BID expanded its popular Walking Tours, offering new ways to explore the area's heritage and identity. Highlights included Wellness Walks through green spaces, Black History and Queer History tours uncovering hidden stories, and Fashion History walks tracing the City's textile legacy from Roman times to today.

Festive Lighting Scheme

For the first time, the BID delivered an area-wide festive lighting scheme, transforming Aldersgate Street, London Wall, and key landmarks including St Bartholomew's Hospital courtyard, London Wall Place, and Holy Sepulchre Church. A central Christmas tree at St Giles' Cripplegate created a community focal point. The scheme boosted footfall, seasonal atmosphere, and local business visibility, reinforcing Culture Mile as a welcoming winter destination.

Property Owner Group

Launched in April 2024, the Property Owner Group brought together landowners to align priorities around development, ground floor use, and construction impact. The group now acts as a strategic forum guiding the BID's Public Realm Vision and ensuring collaboration with the City on placemaking and investment opportunities.



MIPIM 2025

In March 2025, Culture Mile joined fellow City BIDs and the City of London Corporation at MIPIM, the world's leading real estate event, showcasing the Square Mile's transformation and cultural energy. A joint film highlighted investment opportunities and the area's creative economy.

Through its connection to the EFG London Jazz Festival, the BID supported a silent disco on the London Terrace, featuring Phil Hartnoll, Charisse C, and DJ Tigas, celebrating London's diverse nightlife and positioning the City as a vibrant, connected destination.

Right to the City: Creating Safer and More Inclusive Public Spaces

Culture Mile was a key partner in Right to the City, a research project led by Publica exploring how women, girls, and non-binary people experience the City after dark. Through artist-led night walks, youth design challenges, and public events, the project engaged 320+ participants and redefined safety as the presence of joy, belonging, and visibility in public spaces.

Elephant Family - Big Egg Hunt 2025

The Big Egg Hunt 2025 brought vibrant public art to Culture Mile, with striking sculptures across Guildhall Yard, the Barbican Centre, and Bartholomew Close Square. Thousands of visitors followed the interactive digital trail, unlocking prizes while exploring the area. Combining art, conservation, and play, the event boosted footfall and visibility, reinforcing Culture Mile's role as a creative, family-friendly destination.





Sustainable Environment

Safety and Environmental Reporting

The Ambassadors played a crucial role in maintaining a clean, safe, and welcoming environment, recording 5,774 environmental issues throughout the year. The most frequent concerns included abandoned bikes and scooters, on-street waste, and graffiti or fly-posting, with swift follow-up improving the public realm. The team also logged 3,187 intelligence tallies, providing real-time insight into local challenges. Most of these related to commercial waste, alongside reports of busking, rough sleeping, and begging. This proactive reporting strengthened partnerships with local authorities and enforcement agencies, supporting a coordinated approach to cleanliness, safety, and community wellbeing.

Greening Project

The Greening Project advanced the Culture Mile's public realm and biodiversity. A design brief invited landscape architects to deliver short-term placemaking interventions trialling new greening and seating concepts across the BID area. The goal was to appoint a partner to design and implement an area-wide planting scheme

that enhanced biodiversity and reflected priorities in the emerging Public Realm Strategy. The project focused on flexibility and sustainability, ensuring installations were robust, easy to maintain, and helped prevent antisocial behaviour. Collaboration with Transport for London, the City of London Corporation, Pollinating London Together, and local property owners was key. Through planting suited to the City's microclimates, the initiative sought to improve air quality, boost biodiversity, and foster community connection, weaving in storytelling and wayfinding to create greener, more welcoming spaces.

Greener deliveries

Throughout the year we promoted greener delivery schemes, sharing details of the Zero Emissions Network and the Cargo Bike grant for businesses. Where possible, our own deliveries—such as Valentine's boxes—used pedivan services. Working with the City's transport team, we continue to explore ways to improve freight and delivery efficiencies across the Square Mile, reducing vehicles, improving air quality, and enhancing the pedestrian experience in line with our Public Realm Vision and Strategy.



2,578 abandoned bikes and scooters, **the single most common issue**

45% of all reports

964 road & pavement defects identified



473 street cleaning issues raised to City partners



81%

fix rate across the year



363 cases of graffiti and fly-posting reported



971 on-street waste issues logged

Wellness Walks

The Wellbeing Walk offered a refreshing lunchtime break through the hidden corners of the Culture Mile's 2,000-year history. It explored Smithfield's royal connections, the legacy of medieval monasteries, and the Roman roots of the Barbican estate, with a tranquil pause in Postman's Park. The walk encouraged participants to take a break from screens, connect with colleagues and neighbours, and enjoy the area's heritage and green spaces.

Wild Life Drawing

The Easter Drawing Class brought creativity and joy to Goldsmiths' Garden, a hidden oasis in the heart of the Culture Mile. The session invited participants to sketch friendly visitors from Vauxhall City Farm, including goats, sheep, guinea pigs, and Easter bunnies. Attendees learned about the animals' care and behaviour while capturing their forms and personalities. Dedicated to animal welfare, Wild Life Drawing works only with trusted partners. The relaxed two-hour session offered a focused lunchtime activity celebrating art, nature, and community in one of the City's most charming green spaces.





406
businesses
engaged

981
Ambassador visits to
local businesses

Connected Business Community

Community Safety

Community Safety Week brought together 50+ participants for sessions on conflict management, personal safety, and cyber awareness. Partnering with Fleet Street Quarter and the City of London Police, activities included “Coffee with a Cop” and a Cyber Security Escape Room. Additional Ask Angela and WAVE Training events offered safeguarding advice for local businesses, helping build a safer, more confident, and connected district for all.

We Can Be

The We Can Be programme empowered young women (15–18) to explore careers in the City, engaging 283 students from 22 schools and 43 businesses. Delivered as part of the Lord Mayor’s City Giving Day, it offered workshops with business leaders to build confidence and awareness of finance and professional careers. Thanks to BID sponsorship, participation remained free for schools, ensuring access for all backgrounds. Post-event feedback showed strong impact: 84% of students understood City career skills (up from 51%) 86% would now consider a City career, and 82% felt confident they could achieve it, demonstrating clear success in inspiring the next generation.

Knowledge Exchange

The BID hosted its first Knowledge Exchange Event at CCT Venues, focusing on “Supporting Your Business Goals” for SMEs, CICs, and freelancers. Speakers from MHA MacIntyre Hudson, Barclays Eagle Labs, and Empower Agency shared practical insights on sustainability, business growth, and social media. A networking lunch and Business Stands session connected attendees with organisations including Newable, United Trust Bank, and Heart of the City, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing within the local business community.

The Voice of Women in Business

The BID delivered an exclusive Guildhall Ignite taster session for women and non-binary professionals to build confidence and authentic communication. Led by specialist coaches, the session used performing arts and executive coaching techniques to help participants project presence, clarity, and purpose in professional settings, promoting inclusive leadership and empowerment.



Business Engagement

Supporting local enterprise remained at the heart of the Ambassadors' work. They completed 981 businesses visited and engaged with 406 businesses across the area. Acting as trusted connectors, they shared updates, gathered feedback, and encouraged engagement in BID initiatives, helping Culture Mile thrive as a collaborative business district.

Community Fund

The 2024/25 Culture Mile BID Community Fund invested £60,000 across 16 organisations, reaching over 11,000 people through grants of up to

£6,500. Projects covered arts, wellbeing, education, sustainability, and inclusion—highlights included VOCES8's "Sing Every Day," the London Autism Group's Community Café, and St Giles' Art and Creativity Ministry for homeless youth. The fund enabled 40m of hedgerow planting, 480 volunteer hours, and 100+ poems for NHS staff, with 87% of grantees reporting stronger community impact. It reinforced the BID's role as a catalyst for creativity and local empowerment.



Funding Focus

480

Volunteer
hours



73%

Arts &
culture



60%

Mental health
& wellbeing



53%

Climate &
nature



Culture
Community
2024

Launched

August
2024

16

Projects
funded

Outputs & Outcomes



87%

grantees agreed
they had strong
community
impact

100

poems for
NHS staff

**Culture Mile
Community Fund
2024-25**

£60k+

invested in
community

11k+

People
benefited

22

Teacher
Training
hours



24

weekly
drumming
workshops

40m

of hedgerow
planted

366

swimming
hours

22

School singing
workshops



50,925

visitors welcomed
by our Ambassadors

201

visitors per
day average

Cultural Destination

Visitor Welcome

During 2024-25, the Culture Mile Street Ambassadors engaged 50,925 visitors, around 201 per day, and recorded 24,017 detailed interactions. Acting as the friendly face of the BID, they offered wayfinding, event updates, and visitor support across Moorgate, Aldersgate, and Smithfield. Their presence reinforced Culture Mile's goal to remain an accessible, people-focused destination.

Arts for All Report Launched

The BID co-funded with the GLA, Arts for All, an independent report from Centre for London. Launched at the Barbican Centre in April, the report identified barriers such as cost, travel, and safety, that limit access to culture and proposed solutions like a national arts pass for under-25s. Culture Mile's support highlighted its mission to embed culture at the heart of City life through public realm projects and partnerships with major cultural institutions.

Barbican Outdoor Cinema

As Destination Partner for the 2024 Barbican Outdoor Cinema, the BID helped attract 7,000+ attendees, boosting visibility and evening footfall. With a marketing reach of nearly 2 million, strong press coverage, and inclusive programming, the event strengthened Culture Mile's brand and its role in enhancing cultural participation.

Purple Hibiscus

In partnership with the Barbican, the BID supported Purple Hibiscus by Ibrahim Mahama with 2,000m² of vibrant fabric wrapping the Barbican façade. The installation drew 380,000+ visitors, 100,000 online interactions, 117 media features, and 5.7 million views. The project delivered a bold cultural statement, reinforcing pride of place and creative identity across Culture Mile.

Summer of Sport in the City

Through the City-wide "Summer of Sport" campaign, the BID hosted six open-air fitness classes and six table cricket sessions, engaging 350+ participants. Collaborating with Lord's Taverners, the programme promoted wellbeing, inclusivity, and active public spaces, launching at Guildhall Yard and closing on City Giving Day.

Swap Shop

To mark World Earth Day 2024, the BID, Brookfield Properties, and Verte ran a three-day Pop-Up Swap Shop. It drew 651 attendees, with 965 items swapped, 123 repaired, and 120+ items donated, saving 8,592kg CO₂ and 2.77m litres of water. Workshops and sustainable activities boosted footfall and showcased creative placemaking.



410k+

people attended
events supported
by the BID

6,100+

Total attendees
to BID events

Oktoberfest

The BID sponsored Brookfield's Oktoberfest 2024 at Citypoint Plaza, featuring live music, axe throwing, and giveaways. The event supported local hospitality, encouraged post-work footfall, and enhanced the area's evening vibrancy and community spirit.

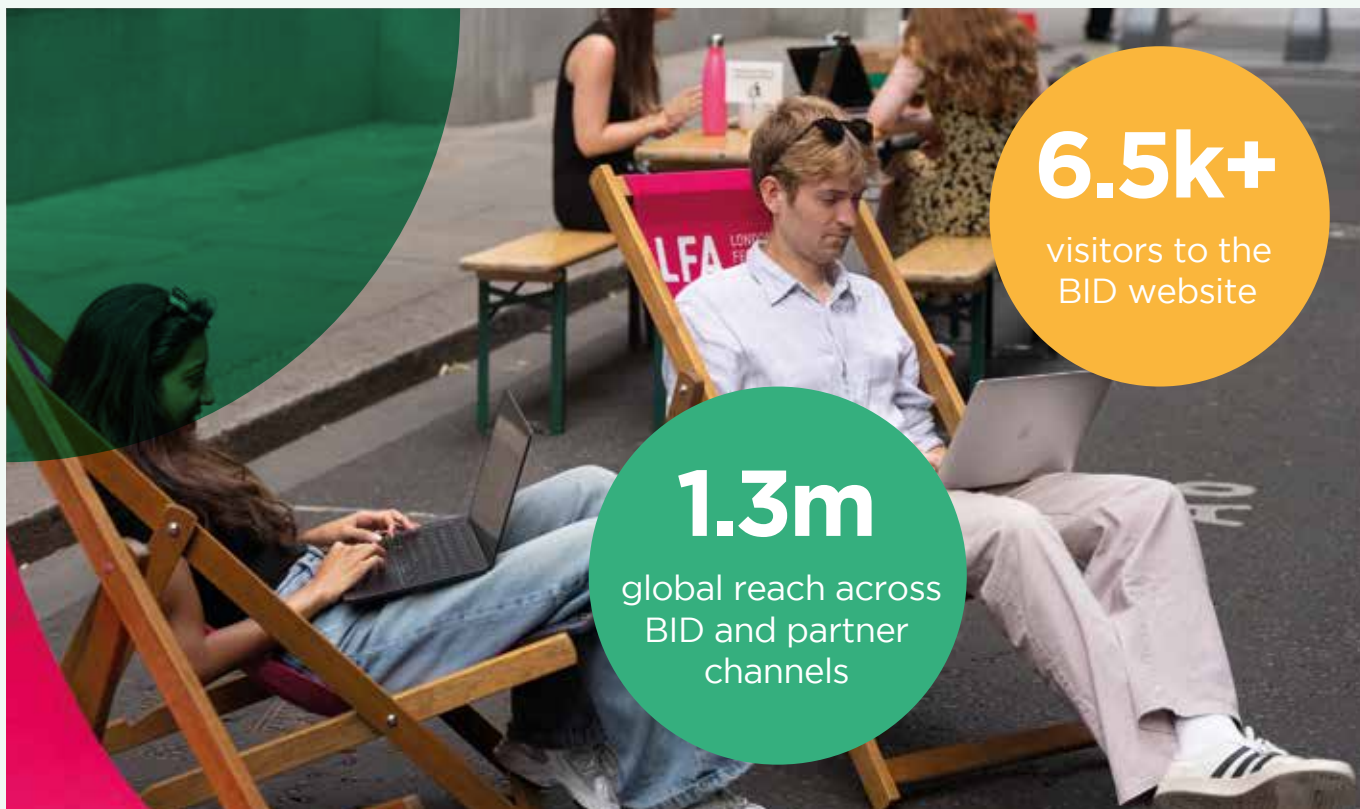
Jazz Social

As part of the EFG London Jazz Festival, the BID backed The Jazz Social pop-up at Citypoint, attracting 5,000+ visitors over two weeks. With live gigs, family events, and five days of Jazz FM broadcasts, the venue boosted after-hours engagement and supported emerging talent. This was the first time the festival had a Home Hub of its own, feedback was strong and positive, showing a clear appetite for more creative pop-ups in meanwhile spaces.

Festive Season

During the 2024-25 festive season, Culture Mile BID delivered a dynamic programme celebrating creativity, community, and connection across the area. Highlights included the Christmas Makers Market, which attracted strong attendance and media coverage, and the Big Christmas Party, showcasing the area's diverse culture and hospitality. An outdoor carol concert at St Giles Cripplegate further enlivened the public realm and strengthened partnerships with local schools and music groups. The BID also hosted a wreath-making workshop to support wellbeing and workplace engagement, alongside an inclusive Chanukah celebration in partnership with Jewish Square Mile. Together, these events reinforced Culture Mile's reputation as a welcoming destination that fosters creativity, wellbeing, and a strong sense of community during the winter season.





Digital Communications & Marketing

Between April 2024 and March 2025, Culture Mile BID's digital presence grew significantly, reinforcing its reputation as a creative and connected district. Through storytelling, strategic campaigns, and high-profile partnerships, the BID expanded reach and deepened engagement across social media, web, and email channels.

Digital Channels and Website

The BID's platforms performed strongly throughout the year. Instagram followers rose 48%, while LinkedIn engagement increased 70% year-on-year, with post impressions up 104% between autumn 2024 and early 2025. The website averaged 500-550 monthly visits with a 60% engagement rate, spiking during key campaigns such as the Community Fund, Christmas, and Easter events. Monthly newsletters outperformed industry benchmarks, achieving 46-67% open rates and up to 9.1% click rates.



Campaign Highlights

Digital storytelling underpinned the BID's communications.

- The Earth Day SWAP SHOP campaign, with Brookfield Properties, generated 600,000 impressions, 4,100 clicks, and 249 sign-ups.
- Purple Hibiscus and the Barbican Outdoor Cinema extended reach to new audiences. Purple Hibiscus achieved 1M+ organic reach, 12K likes, and 303K video plays, while the Outdoor Cinema delivered 200K+ impressions and 150K reach through influencer content.
- The Visit London x Barbican competition showcased Culture Mile to new regional audiences.
- Community and leisure campaigns, including Jazz Social and Oktoberfest 2024, drove strong engagement around food, culture, and nightlife.

Partnerships and Amplified Reach

Partnerships were central to the BID's success. Collaborations with One City London extended exposure to 150K+ Instagram and 20K TikTok followers, introducing Culture Mile's creative identity to wider audiences. Work with Hawksmoor Guildhall, South Place Hotel, and Montcalm Royal London House further positioned the district as a welcoming, experience-driven destination bridging business and culture.

Visitors & Footfall

Throughout 2024-25, Culture Mile BID area experienced a strong year of growth in visitor activity, reflecting the area’s increasing appeal as both a cultural and commercial destination. Footfall across the district rose steadily throughout the year, supported by major public events, improved visitor infrastructure, and a growing calendar of business and community activity.

Total annual footfall reached 56.4 million, marking an increase of 21% year-on-year, with an average of 154,600 visitors per day across the district. This growth demonstrates the sustained vitality of Culture Mile’s public spaces and the successful impact of coordinated programming and place management initiatives.

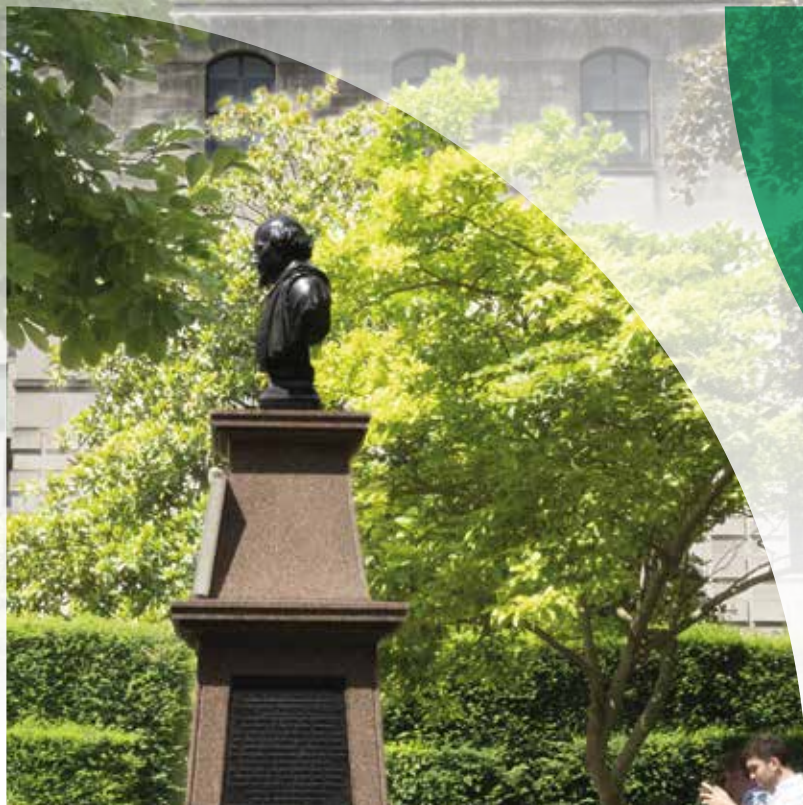
Midweek remained the busiest period for footfall, with Thursdays drawing over 200,000 daily visitors, followed closely by Wednesdays and Tuesdays. This weekday strength reflects the district’s dual draw as a working environment and a leisure destination. Weekend figures also rose, with Saturday and Sunday visits up by more than 13%, showing renewed appetite for cultural exploration and social activity.

Demographically, the visitor profile remained broad and balanced, with 57% of visitors aged 30–59 and an almost even gender split (51% male, 49% female). This data reinforces Culture Mile’s position as a welcoming and diverse destination, attracting professionals, residents, and cultural audiences alike.

Key Footfall Metrics

Metric	2023-24	2024-25	Change
Total annual footfall 	46,647,910	56,437,518	+21% 
Average daily visitors	127,453	154,600	+21.3%
Busiest day	Thursday (158,116)	Thursday (200,025)	+26.5%
Quietest day	Sunday (75,701)	Sunday (86,541)	+14.3%
30–44 yrs	30.2%	30.6%	+0.4pp
15–29 yrs	26.0%	26.4%	+0.4pp
45–59 yrs	22.5%	22.3%	-0.2pp
60+ yrs	21.2%	20.7%	-0.5pp
Male / Female	50.8% / 49.2%	50.8% / 49.2%	No change





Governance, Board & Team

Governance

The BID is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, led by a Board of Directors made up of representatives from across sectors within the BID area. The BID term started on the 1st April 2023 and runs until 31st March 2028. The BID's activities are driven by a set of steering groups leading each key strategic theme of the BID. The Executive Team manages the projects that deliver the BID's ambitions.

Board

Andrew Smith (Chair) Broadfield Law

Andrew Heald Baird

Timur Tezisler Bank ABC

Ali Mirza Barbican Centre

Charles Knight Barts Health NHS Trust

Ruth Hoy DLA Piper

Sian Brittain Guildhall School of Music & Drama

Jennifer Reeve Legal & General

Rajeev Shaunak MHA McIntyre Hudson

David Banks Phillips 66

Angeli Ganoo-Fletcher PRP Architects

Board and Team

BID Activities are managed by a not-for-profit company directed by a board of local business leaders to whom the BID team is accountable. The day to day activity and management of projects is delivered by an executive team.

Executive Team

Austin Casey Chief Executive

Sarah Baker Head of Partnerships & Engagement

Will Dyson Director of Placemaking

Caroline Hanson Director of Communications & Marketing

Anita Kwasniewski Events Manager

Dhino Panchalingam Digital Marketing Manager

Beth Nash Safe & Secure Manager

Mohammad Saqib Finance Manager

Aynkaran Markandu Finance Assistant

Street Ambassador Team

Greig Oldbury

Giovanni Ramnath

Ceyda Mehmet

Caleb Johnson



Income & Expenditure

Income and Expenditure to 31 March 2025

Income	Total £
BID Levy Income	3,014,655
Voluntary Income and Sponsorship	32,500
2023-24 Closing reserves	1,119,441
Total Income	4,166,596
Expenditure	Total £
Sustainable Environment	170,694
Connected Community	380,518
Inspiring Places	315,148
Cultural Destination	605,503
Staffing and Overheads	256,565
Total Expenditure	1,728,428
Surplus carried forward to 2025-26	2,438,168







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